

Quid Novi

VOL. VI NO. 1

McGILL UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW
FACULTE DE DROIT UNIVERSITE MCGILL

September 4, 1985
4 septembre, 1985

Who Is The Faculty of Law at McGill?

by Dean R.A. Macdonald

When the editor of *Quid Novi* asked me this summer to write a short article for the first issue in September, I thought initially of trying to answer the question "what is the Faculty of Law at McGill University all about?" But as I began to write, it occurred to me that this was really the wrong way to introduce students to the Faculty. For as I reflected back upon the events of my initial year as Dean I realized that what is truly unique about McGill is not a "what" but a "who".

To be sure, at McGill we can boast that we are Canada's oldest Law Faculty: lectures in law commenced in 1844. We can also claim that our National Programme is unique in the world: at McGill both great Western legal traditions -- the common law and the civil law -- are taught side by side in Canada's two official languages -- French and English. Again, all agree that McGill has been a leading contributor to the advancement of legal knowledge over the past century: nine Supreme Court Justices, dozens of Justices of Appeal and several leading law teachers have been McGill graduates.

These are, of course, important achievements, but they do not suggest the single most distinctive asset of the Faculty: the remarkable people who have been associated with it over the years. McGill has always had

an international and scholarly vocation, nourished both by its Professors and its students.

A sense of this special vocation can be gained simply by looking at the diversity of background and experience of various members of the Law Faculty community. Today we count professors who obtained their initial legal training in five Canadian provinces -- Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta -- as well as professors from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Rou-

mania, Australia, and New Zealand. Similarly, over 500 graduate students are drawn from all ten Canadian provinces, several states in the United States and a variety of European countries. What is more, graduates of McGill pursue their legal careers in private practice, government, industry, labour, international organizations, and in teaching all around the world. From the 1985 graduating class approximately 55 are now at the Bar in Quebec, 25 in Ontario, 15 elsewhere in Canada, 15 in the United States, 15 in the United Kingdom, 15 in France, 15 in Belgium, 15 in the Netherlands, 15 in Yugoslavia, 15 in Rou-

Cont'd on p. 3

Specialization - the wave of the future

As human activity becomes more diversified and complex, the division of labour must become more specialized so as to meet the growing demand for specific needs. Such specialization can be found within many of our professions today. For instance, no longer does it seem possible to go to one's family physician and expect him/her to deal with a myriad of problems. Rather, a specialist in a particular field must now be consulted. As human activity becomes more diversified and complex, the division of labour must become more specialized so as to meet the growing demand for specific needs. Such specialization can be found within many of our professions today. For instance, no longer does it seem possible to go to one's family physician and expect him/her to deal with a myriad of problems. Rather, a specialist in a particular field must now be consulted.

This same trend is present in the legal profession, where one is said to do corporate law, or tax law, or family law, or... Seldom, it seems, is any significant interchange between these various areas of law contemplated (or practised if one is working in the larger firms). Indeed, as each area of the law becomes more complex, the more one must focus on that particular area so as to ensure its mastery. However, there may result from this specialization a compartmentalization of the law which may be undesirable, though quite inevitable.

If each area of the law is to grow and develop independently, certain lacunae will inevitably emerge, and that

Cont'd on p. 3

Quid Novi is published weekly by students at the Faculty of Law of McGill University, 3644 Peel St., Montreal H3A 1W9. Production is made possible by support of the Dean's office, the Law Students' Association, and by direct funding from the students. Opinions expressed are those of the author only. Contributions are published at the discretion of the editor and must indicate author or origin.

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Quid Novi est une publication hebdomadaire assurée par les étudiants de la faculté de droit de l'université McGill, 3644 rue Peel Montréal, H3A 1W9. La publication est rendue possible grâce à l'appui du bureau du doyen, de l'Association des étudiants en droit ainsi que par le financement individuel des étudiants. Les opinions exprimées sont propre à l'auteur. Toute contribution n'est publiée qu'à la discrétion du comité de rédaction et doit indiquer l'auteur ou son origine.

EDITORIAL

Excerpt from One L by Scott Turow:

It is Monday morning, and when I walk into the central building I can feel my stomach clench. For the next five days I will assume that I am somewhat less intelligent than anyone around me. At most moments I'll suspect that the privilege I enjoy was conferred as some kind of peculiar hoax. I will be certain that no matter what I do, I will not do it well enough, and when I fail, I know that I will burn with shame. By Friday my nerves will be so brittle from sleeplessness and pressure and intellectual fatigue that I will not be certain I can make it through the day. After years off, I have begun to smoke cigarettes again; lately, I seem to be drinking a little every night. I do not have the time to read a novel or a magazine, and I am so far removed from the news of world events that I often feel as if I've fallen off the dark side of the planet. I am distracted at most times and have difficulty keeping up a conversation, even with my wife. At random instants, I am likely to be stricken with acute feelings of panic, depression, indefinite need, and the pep talks and irony I practice on myself only seem to make it worse.

I am a law student in my first year at the law, and there are many moments when I am simply a mess.

The average age of a student entering McGill Law School is somewhere around 23. For some of us it is a four year sentence and for others the sentence is commuted after three years. No one would dispute the conclusion that a 3-4 year period is a formidable chunk out of anyone's life.

It is not difficult for those of us returning to identify with the above excerpt by Scott Turow. First year is not the only year in law school when so much of our time is spent consumed by anxiety. Late night studying, mounting tension, legal introspection, chain smoking and general panic start slowly in September and build steadily until they explode in a 2-week extravaganza in December often referred to as "exams". The cycle then repeats itself in January.

Four years is too long a time for any individual to be intellectually monogamous because they "don't have the time", to atrophy artistically and athletically because they "don't have the time", to become emotionally anaesthetized because they just don't have the time.

It is not uncommon to hear students commenting on how they become their "real selves" during the summer months (that is aside from those who work for Ogilvy, Renault). Yet there are those among us who manage to escape the Jekyll and Hyde phenomenon. It is not disputed that law school requires a great amount of energy, commitment, time, and

Cont 'd on p. 5

I Was One With Bernie Goetz

by Bettina Karpel

Just When You Thought It Was Safe to Go Back to the Library...

I had been working at the same desk for a couple of days and the people around were familiar to me. That day, though, something felt a little different; it was just one of those subconscious feelings that nag at you, but that you can't really pin down.

Every time I left my desk he seemed to be watching. He would move closer to my desk and then quickly move away when he saw me approaching. It got to the point where I decided to take my purse with me when I left my desk, but with all the books I had to carry, the purse became cumbersome. So I left it hanging on my chair.

I only noticed when a friend asked me for some gum. The gum was in my purse. The wallet wasn't.

That's when I was one with Bernie Goetz. Basically it was my fault, I was stupid to leave my purse unattended. But I was also angry. I rushed down to tell the circulation librarian what had happened, but the news was old news. Someone else on the 5th had also had her wallet stolen and had just reported it.

At that point my friend, almost as a joke, went to check her purse. Bingo, another wallet gone. The whole thing probably took about one minute. It wasn't just me. He got three of us--one, two, three--three in one shot. Not a bad day.

Well, we searched the library and the building for him but we didn't find him.

Eventually all three of us got our wallets returned with the I.D. cards, but no money of course.

The moral of the story is an obvious one: Don't leave valuable objects unattended in the library. You might think that those around you are watching your belongings, but let's face it, the people who do this kind of thing are not amateurs. They know the right moment to grab what they're after.

Faculty of Law Cont'd from p. 1

States and 5 in Europe, South America, Hong Kong and Singapore. Moreover, some 15 graduates of 1985 are pursuing Master's and Doctoral studies in France, England and the United States.

McGill's international and scholarly vocation is also reflected in you, the members of the first-year class. Let me tell you a little about yourselves. Some 1500 students applied for admission to the Faculty; you are a select group of 135 who were admitted. You have a wide variety of earlier studies: you have backgrounds in the sciences, in management, in engineering, in music and in the humanities and social sciences. You have quite divergent levels of prior study: a number of you are entering directly from CEGEP, while others are in the process of completing Masters or Doctoral Programmes. One-third of you is francophone and approximately one-half of you is of each sex. Some of you are under the age of twenty, but many are also over the age of thirty.

Notwithstanding this diversity, what do each of you, and each professor at McGill have in common? Your

shared commitment, I believe, is to excellence. In other words, the Faculty welcomes students of varied backgrounds, knowing that diversity itself enriches the experience of all. I know that you, too, as students, welcome the opportunity to study under a group of professors each pursuing excellence in slightly different ways -- be these differences reflected in teaching method, in pedagogical style, in course objectives or in materials used.

Over the course of your legal studies, you will derive the most important elements of your education from those around you -- from experiencing the unique perspective that each student and each professor brings to the Faculty. I urge you not to neglect this opportunity, and I wish you the very best as you embark upon the study of law at McGill.

Specialization Cont'd from p. 1

whole of social activity which the law is to address will be dealt with in a piecemeal and inconsistent fashion. Clearly, confusion alone can result.

Moreover, with such compartmentalization, it becomes increasingly incumbent on the client to have to characterize his problem (for instance consumer law rather than corporate law). Such a burden will make the system of justice seem all the more confusing and inaccessible to many, who would rather that such decisions be made by those more knowledgeable.

Though specialization in the law has certain significant drawbacks, it appears to be nonetheless inevitable. One cannot expect a single person to keep abreast of every single area of the law, and to be an expert in each. The volume of literature

Cont'd on p. 5

Friendly Giant Supporters

Last year, concerned McGill law students added their voices to the throngs of Canadians who have been trying to keep the Friendly Giant alive on CBC. Mr. B. Turner, the M.P. concerned, so to speak, responded during the summer to our impassioned pleas:

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for your very kind and appropriate feedback concerning my sincere determination to get the CBC to keep The Friendly Giant on the air forever.

The President of the CBC seems to think that re-runs and some specials will be good enough for Canadians and eventually they plan to start a new children's programme.

I say "if it works -- don't fix it!"

I thought you'd appreciate a copy of a statement that I gave in the House of Commons on June 10, 1985 in which I quoted you.

I'll keep you posted.

Sincerely yours,

J. Barry Turner, M.P.
Ottawa-Carleton.

P.S. Continued pressure on the CBC President will help our cause.

Orientation

Welcome (or, Welcome Back, as the case may be) to Law School. While you were enjoying the summer break, members of your students' association (the LSA) have been meeting regularly to plan a varied and interesting schedule of events for the first few weeks of September.

The aim of each of the events, and of the program as a whole, is to give law students a comfortable atmosphere in which to talk to other law students and members of the Faculty.

We hope that members will take the time to get to know fellow students, representatives

on Faculty and University governing bodies, Professors, and Staff.

We have organized the events, planned the food and the music (not to mention the drink), but, for the Orientation to be a success the main ingredient must be you. Your participation (either in helping to run an event, or just by attending) will be the criterion by which the committee can judge whether or not their time was well spent.

On behalf of the LSA Orientation Committee, we look forward to meeting you at this year's events.

Law Partners

What Exactly is the Law Partners Program?

The Law Partners Program is aimed at pairing an upper year student (2nd, 3rd, 4th) with each first year student. Like other existing programs (Big Brother/Big Sister) the experience of the Law Partner is enlisted to ease the stress placed on the first year student.

How Does the Program Achieve This?

By having someone to talk to, first year students will have the opportunity of benefiting from the knowledge that what they are feeling is normal. Anxiety has always been a part of first year law. The Law Partners program aims at keeping the stress to a bearable minimum. Just knowing that other people have experienced the same fears should help.

What is Expected of a Law Partner?

"A coffee and a chat" a week is the best way that we have been able to define the time requirement expected of each Law Partner. Never expected to be the fountain of all knowledge, the Law Partner is expected to know where the first year student can find an answer to a question or find help with a problem.

How Do I get Involved?

If you are interested in signing up as a Law Partner, check out the posters around the Faculty for the date and time of one of the briefing sessions. If you cannot attend (but are interested, nonetheless) stop one of the Orientation Social Guides (identifiable by the buttons they will be wearing) and ask any questions you might have.

Editorial
Cont'd from p. 2

sacrifice but there must be time to be inquisitive, erratic, and ourselves as well. Four years is a lot of living to lose because there just doesn't seem to be the time.

So when your contracts assignment was due yesterday and exams are just around the corner, play your tuba, read Sartre, call a friend who's not in law school -- and hey -- let's be careful out there.

Debbie Raicek

Specialization
Cont'd from p. 3

alone would be impossible to handle. Thus, the exigencies of our profession and the responsibility attached to our every action make it increasingly difficult for a lawyer to be a generalist rather than a specialist.

As each area of the law is merely one particular thread in the fabric of society, so each must be interwoven with the other so as to avoid entanglement and confusion. With constant and meaningful discussion and debate among and between our specialists, the negative consequences of such specialization will be minimized, and the profession as well as its clientele will be better served.

Dee Prando

Revue de droit de McGill
Séance d'information

Les étudiants(es) de 2e année et ceux(celles) de 3e année inscrits(es) dans le programme national sont cordialement invités(es) à participer à la séance d'information de la Revue de droit de McGill et à connaître les possibilités d'adhésion à la Revue pour l'année qui vient.

Beignes et café seront servis.

Le mercredi lundi 11
septembre
Common Room à 13h00

McGill Law Journal
Information Session

2nd year students and 3rd year students in the National Programme are invited to find out about the Law Journal and the opportunities for working on the Journal during the upcoming year.

Coffee and doughnuts will be served.

Wednesday, 11 September
Common Room at 1:00

Notice

The washroom in Old Chancellor Day Hall (just off the

stairs leading up from the Pit) is no longer a men's washroom. It is now a women's washroom.

Instructing the Star Witness

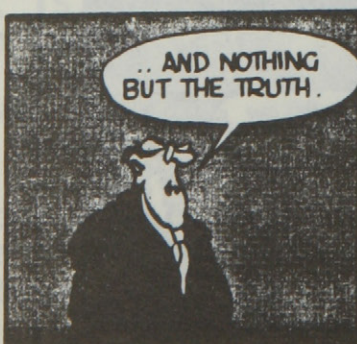
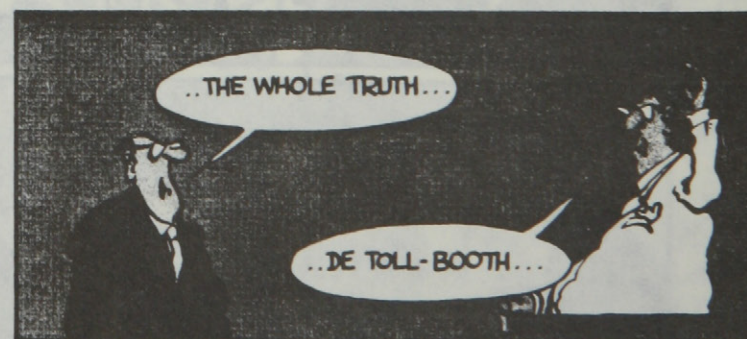
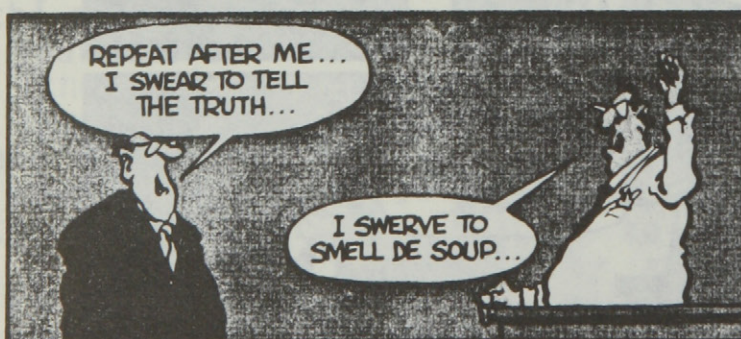


Back By Popular Demand
Quid Novi Presents

Grammy Update

Faculty Council	We are the World
The Glenns	I Ain't Missing You at All
Mme Allaire	Smooth Operator
Mrs. Lederer	Walking on Sunshine
Bettina Karpel	I Might Have Been Queen
Bill Foster	Possession Obsession
Law Journal	Goonies are Good Enough
Madeleine Cantin-Cumyn	Don't You Forget About Me
First Years	Dancing in the Dark
Grades	Tears Are Not Enough
Orientation Week	Live Aid

Taking the Oath



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